

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
/061 W

-----120235 222057Z /64

R 221905Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3552
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: REGIONAL ROUNDUP: PRE-AUTONOMY UPDATE

1. SUMMARY: WITH THE FORMATION OF THE BASQUE GENERAL COUNCIL AND THE ELECTION OF ITS PRESIDENT (SEPTOL), THE TWO MOST PRESSING PRE-AUTONOMY ARRANGEMENTS -- THOSE OF CATALONIA AND THE BASQUE COUNTRY -- HAVE NOW BEEN FORMALLY ESTABLISHED, EVEN THOUGH THEY REMAIN LARGELY INSTITUTIONAL SHELLS WHICH WILL HAVE TO BE GIVEN SUBSTANCE BY ADDITIONAL LEGISLATION AND THE CONSTITUTION ITSELF. THE PACE OF PRE-AUTONOMY NEGOTIATIONS IN THE OTHER REGIONS HAS LAGGED NOTICEABLY, HOWEVER, AS THE GOVT ATTEMPTS TO SLOW THE MOMENTUM OF THE PRE-AUTONOMY ISSUE AND SCALE DOWN INFLATED EXPECTATIONS CONCERNING WHAT THE DEVOLUTION PROCESS IS LIKELY TO PRODUCE IN THE WAY OF CONCRETE RESULTS. EQUALLY
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IMPORTANT, THE GOVT THUS IS ATTEMPTING TO AMELIORATE CONCERNS THAT THE PROCESS -- IF CARRIED OUT TOO QUICKLY -- MIGHT STRENGTHEN CENTRIFUGAL TENDENCIES IN THE REGIONS, OR EVEN ENGENDER THEM WHERE NONE EXISTED BEFORE. EVEN SO, THERE HAS BEEN SOME MOVEMENT ON THE PRE-AUTONOMY FRONT, AND WE THEREFORE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING STATUS REPORT ON THE REMAINING NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH UPDATES THE INFORMATION

PROVIDED IN MADRID 0357. END SUMMARY.

2. ANDALUSIA: FINAL GOVERNMENTAL APPROVAL OF THE PRE-AUTONOMY STATUTE REMAINS STUCK ON THE ISSUE OF HOW THE PRESIDENT OF THE ANDALUSIAN JUNTA IS TO BE ELECTED. THE GOVT IS DEMONSTRABLY RELUCTANT TO GIVE THE PSOE YET ANOTHER REGIONAL PRESIDENCY.

3. ARAGON: A DRAFT PRE-AUTONOMY STATUTE STRONGLY RESEMBLING THOSE OF THE OTHER REGIONS REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE REGION'S PARLIAMENTARIANS. BUT THE GOVT HAS YET TO ACT ON IT.

4. ASTURIAS: AGREEMENT BY THE ONE-PROVINCE (OVIEDO) REGION'S PARLIAMENTARIANS ON A DRAFT STATUTE REPORTEDLY IS HUNG UP ON DISAGREEMENT OVER THE MECHANISM FOR ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, WHERE AS IN ANDALUSIA THE PSOE DESIRES A SIMPLE MAJORITY VOTE WHILE UCD SUPPORTS ELECTION BY "CONSENSUS."

5. BALEARICS: THE ISLANDS' PARLIAMENTARIANS REPORTEDLY HAVE AGREED ON A DRAFT STATUTE WHICH THEY ARE NOW NEGOTIATING WITH THE GOVT. AS IN THE CASE OF THE CANARIES (BELOW), SOME DIFFERENCES REPORTEDLY HAVE SURFACED BETWEEN THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SMALLER AND LARGER ISLANDS.

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6. CANARIES: THE ARCHIPELAGO'S PARLIAMENTARIANS CONTINUE TO BE UNABLE TO AGREE AMONG THEMSELVES BECAUSE OF REPORTED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SMALLER AND LARGER ISLANDS AS BETWEEN PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION (SUPPORTED BY THE LARGER ISLANDS) AND EQUAL REPRESENTATION FOR ALL ISLANDS (BACKED BY THE SMALLER FRY).

7. CASTILLE-LEON: THIS REGION CONSISTS OF ALL BUT TWO OF THE PROVINCES OF THE HISTORICAL REGION OF OLD CASTILLE, AVILA, SEGOVIA, PALENCIA, BURGOS, SORIA, AND VALLADOLID, PLUS THE THREE PROVINCES OF THE HISTORICAL REGION OF LEON, ZAMORA, SALAMANCA, AND LEON. (THE REMAINING TWO PROVINCES OF THE REGION OF OLD CASTILLE, SANTANDER AND LOGRONO, HAVE NOT DEFINED THEMSELVES ON THE AUTONOMY ISSUE YET, ALTHOUGH THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SENTIMENT IN EACH FOR THE FORMATION OF ONE-PROVINCE REGIONS.) THE PARLIAMENTARIANS OF CASTILLE-LEON CONTINUE TO DISAGREE AMONG THEMSELVES ON THEIR DRAFT STATUTE.

8. CASTILLE-LA MANCHA: PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM THE PROVINCES OF THE HISTORICAL REGION OF NEW CASTILLE -- GUADALAJARA, CUENCA, CIUDAD REAL, AND TOLEDO -- PLUS THOSE

OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBACETE (WHICH HAS TRADITIONALLY BELONGED TO THE REGION OF MURCIA) REPORTEDLY ARE CLOSE TO AGREEMENT ON A CONSENSUS DRAFT. (WE NOTE THAT THE PROVINCE OF MADRID, ALTHOUGH PART OF THE HISTORICAL REGION OF NEW CASTILLE, WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE TREATED SEPARATELY. IT MAY BECOME A ONE-PROVINCE REGION.)

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9. EXTREMADURA: EXTREMADURAN PARLIAMENTARIANS TURNED OVER TO THE GOVT IN LATE JANUARY A CONSENSUS DRAFT STATUTE.

10. GALICIA: A CONSENSUS DRAFT STATUTE IS NOW IN THE HANDS OF THE GOVT.

11. MURCIA: THE PARLIAMENTARIANS OF MURCIA APPEAR TO BE THE LEAST ADVANCED IN THE STATUTE DRAFTING PROCESS.

12. VALENCIA: A CONSENSUS DRAFT STATUTE HAS BEEN TURNED OVER TO THE GOVT. STABLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONAL UNIFICATION, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MADRID01901
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780082-0810
Format: TEL
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780229/aaaaaxp.tel
Line Count: 165
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2b232bd2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3523540
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REGIONAL ROUNDUP: PRE-AUTONOMY UPDATE
TAGS: PINT, SP
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2b232bd2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014